

SMART security encourages democracy-building, human rights education, conflict resolution through non-military means, educational opportunities, particularly for women and girls, and strengthening civil society programs in the developing world.

Mr. Speaker, our future efforts in Iraq must take the SMART approach: humanitarian assistance to rebuild Iraq's war-torn physical and economic infrastructure. Congress must commit to this type of support for Iraq, not a continuation of a military approach.

It is time to support our troops and begin the difficult recovery process from a long and destructive war. The best way to do this is to bring our troops home. Mr. Speaker, our troops deserve nothing less.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FRANKS of Arizona addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Ms. BEAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. BEAN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege this evening to be joined by some of my colleagues. We went to Iraq a few weeks ago. We find a lot of conversation on the House floor about what should and should not be done, and so we would like to take this opportunity to discuss what we saw.

I guess one of the main objectives tonight is to inform the public that this is not always a highly partisan issue. The Members that went to Iraq were both Republicans and Democrats. We got along very well. We continue to get along very well. Sometimes the general impression that is conveyed by conversation on the House floor is that we are always at each other's throats and that this is what politics is all about. I think this is very misleading in many cases; and as a result, we hope to have a bipartisan discussion tonight of those events that we encountered as we traveled overseas.

Those who went with us were the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BRADLEY), the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ), who is here now, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER), and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL).

As we talked to the soldiers over there, we often heard this comment: there seem to be really two wars. There is the war that oftentimes is seen on television; and certainly the bombings, the beheadings and all the really violent things we see are very true, they are part of this conflict; but also the soldiers would continually mention the fact that there is another war that they are seeing, another war they are fighting that oftentimes is not conveyed over the airwaves. So we would like to really discuss these issues.

I have made three trips to Iraq. I have been to Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Jordan twice, Landstuhl Air Base in Germany a couple of times, and Walter Reed many times. So I have had many chances to talk to the soldiers. And I guess the thing that continues to impress me and the overwhelming impression that I get is the efficiency of our Army, the sense of mission, the sense of accomplishment, and a generally upbeat attitude.

Now, certainly being in Iraq or Kuwait or Afghanistan, or in a hospital, cannot be an entirely uplifting experience; and there is some hardship and there is some difficulty. But, still, it seems the soldiers are amazingly intact and amazingly upbeat when you consider their circumstances.

I will just mention two things on this trip and then turn it over to some of my other colleagues here for discussion. The first stop that we had in Iraq was at al Asad. Al Asad is a base out in the desert. It is in al Anbar Province, which is the largest province in Iraq. It is a desert area. It is becoming a fairly dangerous area because many of the insurgents have been driven out of the cities and are now in the desert. So it is a fairly wild situation.

In my previous trips, again I had always had a fairly positive reception from the troops. But as we landed in al Anbar, I thought, well, this is the place where I am going to start hearing the complaints. Because there was not a blade of grass, there was not a tree, obviously very little to do socially, and quite a large number of troops out there. There are two groups from Nebraska, one was a medical troop and one was a transportation group. So I spent quite a bit of time talking to those soldiers, probably met about 100 of them personally, and there were about another 80 who were out on patrol. Again, the same attitude that we had encountered other places was very prevalent. They were proud of what they were doing, they had a sense of mission, and generally were very positive about what was going on.

So that trip, the first part, was, again, somewhat of a surprise in view of the surroundings. The second area that I want to mention was towards the end of our trip. We went to an Iraqi women's caucus, and this caucus was held in Jordan on the banks of the Dead Sea. And the reason we went over there was that we had formed an Iraqi Women's Caucus for Women's Issues here in Washington.

The genesis of that caucus was simply a conversation between Paul Wolfowitz, Jennifer Dunn, and myself, where we began to speculate on the role of women in the new Iraqi government as the war progressed. And we began to talk about the fact that women would certainly play an important role; that women oftentimes are the peacemakers; and possibly to have a positive resolution to this whole conflict would have to involve the women of Iraq.

So we began to move forward on this. Iraqi women were brought to the United States. And part of this movement was to bring Iraqi women over to the Dead Sea, out of Iraq, where they could learn a little more about democracy and strategies in terms of running for office and so on.

So there were 1,000 women who applied for 250 spots at this seminar. And so we met with those 250 women. They came by auto, and they came from all